

# SHORT SUBJECTS

## Your College's Good Name, Up in Smoke

A COLLEGE CAN SPEND millions of dollars a year polishing its image, but one viral video on a user-generated Web site like YouTube can undo it all in a minute and a half.

Some colleges, like the University of Wisconsin at Madison, are lucky enough to have user-generated campus tours come up on their first YouTube hit. Others have set up their own YouTube channels: Auburn University has uploaded more than 150 videos to the site.

And then there are the ones that make college-admissions officers cringe. Here are four of the quirkier videos that recently popped up as the first YouTube hit for selected institutions:

**Search term:** U. of Colorado at Boulder

**Video:** "420 2008 University of Colorado, Boulder. Norlin Quad"

**Added:** April 20, 2008

**Views:** 13,800+

**What it is:** A home video showing thousands of students in a haze of smoke at 4:20 p.m. on April 20, 2008, in what has become an annual tradition of public cannabis consumption on the university's main quad.



**Search term:** U. of Idaho

**Video:** "Web Pages That Suck—University of Idaho"

**Added:** November 28, 2006

**Views:** 25,000+

**What it is:** A voice-over criticism of the former Web site for the university's children's center, wherein the narrator describes the site as "one of the strangest uses of contrast I've seen."



■ To view a compilation of these videos, or each video in its entirety, go to <http://chronicle.com/multimedia>.

**Search term:** U. of Central Florida

**Video:** "The Crazy Preacher and His Wife"

**Added:** November 29, 2006

**Views:** 93,000+

**What it is:** Footage of a roaming evangelist and his wife, who apparently travel to various Florida colleges, railing against homosexuality and masturbation and drawing heated arguments from students.



**Search term:** Syracuse U.

**Video:** "Tyler Gets Into Syracuse University"

**Added:** December 2, 2007

**Views:** 2,500+

**What it is:** A 10-minute "live documentation" of one student's personal acceptance to the university in December 2006. The student delivers monologues into a hand-held camera, at one point even while using a public bathroom, and later watches his parents jump for joy at his acceptance.



—JJ HERMES